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DE RUEHSG #0383 1121928
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4829
INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 3938
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 2402
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 1457
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 0871
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 2065
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 6147
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 4370
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 2326
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC

UNCLAS SANTIAGO 000383

SIPDIS

STATE FOR R/MR, I/PP, WHA/BSC, WHA/PDA, INR/IAA

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: CHILE MEDIA REPORT - APRIL 22

Leading Stories

1. Information revealed under the new Transparency Law has ignited debate on how the government spends its funds. The information also revealed the practice among some agencies of hiring more contract workers than salaried employees, which is in violation of the law.

U.S.-Related News

2. Editorial: "The Relation of the United States with the region after the Summit of the Americas": "President Obama's willingness to listen and to present his country as an equal in the hemispheric community was important in how he approached the summit.... His respectful attitude earned him everyone's approval and began a new era of goodwill between Washington and the continent. That new disposition is the Summit's most important accomplishment.... Let us hope that the 'new spirit of Port of Spain' serves as a foundation on which we can build trust and move forward in the relations between the United States and the hemisphere. If no concrete steps follow, the summit will become just another false beginning in the long process trial and error process that has characterized inter-American relations" (La Tercera, conservative, independent, circ. 101,000, 4/22).

3. The GOC is attempting to boost the development of non-conventional renewable energy and to this end will open a bid for the construction of a photovoltaic solar farm and a solar concentration plant in northern Chile, said Energy Minister Marcelo Tokman. The initiative will have an important starting point: on Friday, Tokman will speak at a seminar in San Francisco, CA, for the players involved in these initiatives, that is, builders, operators, and clients (El Mercurio, conservative, influential newspaper-of-record (circ. 129,000, 4/22).

4. Phyllis Yoshida, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Energy Cooperation in the Office of Policy and International Affairs, U.S. Department of Energy, met yesterday with the Minister for the Environment Ana Lya Uriarte. Yoshida is in Chile to inform on the Obama administration's new policies in this area (La Nacion, government-owned, editorially independent, circ. 4,200, 4/22).

5. Foreign Affairs Minister Mariano Fernandez said that President Obama had established a "new political climate" at the Summit of the Americas, "that is very important for relations of the White House with the region." He expressed the hope that this is not just "a truce," but rather "a great new start for the Western Hemisphere" (La Nacion, 4/22).

¶6. NBC's "Nightly News with Brian Williams" interviewed the Director of NGO "Oceana," Alex Munoz, for a program on the state of the planet's oceans. Munoz spoke about the salmon industry (La Segunda, conservative, afternoon, circ. 33,000, 4/21).

Economic Freedom

¶7. The Heritage Foundation-Wall Street Journal annual Economic Freedom Index placed Chile 11th worldwide and first in Latin America (Estrategia, business and financial, circ. 30,000, 4/22).

UNASUR and Health

¶8. The UNASUR Health Council met in Santiago and agreed to set up an "epidemiological shield" to protect South America from diseases, such as the recent Dengue outbreak in Bolivia, Paraguay, Argentina, and Brazil. The initiative includes an array of epidemiological surveillance methods, which include registering outbreaks and mortality rates in the region (La Nacion, 4/22).

Antarctica

¶9. Argentina filed a claim yesterday with the U.N. Continental Platform Commission that would expand outward its sovereignty from 200 to 350 million miles, or an additional 1.7 million sq. kilometers of ocean. The claim clashes with Chile's territorial extension in Antarctica. In this context, Chile will now present its claim to the U.N. in an effort to clearly define its domain in Antarctica (El Mercurio, 4/22).

SIMONS